



Wild and Scenic *SNAKE RIVER HEADWATERS*



Capacity Workshops Report

Federal agencies administering wild and scenic rivers are required to prepare a Comprehensive River Management Plan (CRMP) for the protection of the river values, development of lands and facilities, user capacities, and other management practices necessary or desirable to achieve the purposes of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968. Specifically, the Forest Service (FS) is required to address user capacities in CRMPs to protect the river's values including Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs), free flowing condition and water quality.

The Interagency Guidelines provide clarification related to addressing user capacity and related visitor use and resource management issues:

Management Plans: Will state the kinds and amounts of public use which the river can sustain without impact to the values for which it was designated.

Carrying Capacity: Studies will be made during preparation of the management plan and periodically thereafter to determine the quantity and mixture of recreation and other public uses which can be permitted without adverse impact on the resource values of the river area. Management of the river area can then be planned accordingly.

Public Use and Access: Public use will be regulated and distributed where necessary to protect and enhance (by allowing natural recovery where resources have been damaged) the resource values of the river area.

Workshop participants evaluated indicators based on relevance to protecting river values; whether they measured attributes either currently or likely to be at risk; if they could be monitored with a high degree of confidence; and if they could be monitored without significant additional effort. This evaluation helped to ensure that the plan's protective elements will be both feasible and provide useful management information as the CRMP is implemented into the future.

Out of a long list of potential resource and experience indicators, the evaluation process selected 10 topic areas that could be monitored in a reasonable fashion and that would assist in management understanding of the need for changed action. Participants wrestled with potential thresholds for the indicators that were identified, and determined what additional data needed to be gathered prior to finalizing a proposed action. Team participants also outlined a series of potential management strategies that could occur if approved thresholds are exceeded, and organized these strategies from least restrictive to most intensely-managed. Topics brought up through this process that did not rate indicator status were moved to the prescriptive section of the CRMP. A summary table of the indicators, draft thresholds and strategies is provided at the end of this report.

Recreation use amount estimates may be expected to change over time, as conditions change and better information becomes available, but planners expect that these estimates will provide helpful inputs for any future use limitation decisions. Any such site-specific limitations would require a separate and public decision-making process. Only the Snake River Canyon already sees the level of visitation that has necessitated a use-limits system, and that decision is currently being implemented through the Snake River Plan, successfully protecting the identified resources for that segment.

The draft Forest Plan Amendment with its associated table of proposed protective standards and guidelines for projects, an indicators and thresholds table and a monitoring schedule should be released by late 2012 as a proposed action in a scoping document for formal public comment. New issues that might drive alternative formulation, or ongoing issues perceived as not addressed by the proposed action, would surface at this time. Specialists will be asked to conduct their effects analyses over the winter.

The *DRAFT* Thresholds table below provides a starting point for discussion with stakeholders. Your input may be offered individually, or you may arrange for our staff to visit with your organization or agency. Contact: swoods@fs.fed.us

River Value	Indicator	Thresholds				Potential Mgmt Actions
		Wilderness “Wilds” Segments: Snake, Pacific, Buffalo Forks, Gros Ventre, Granite, Crystal, and Shoal	Non-Wilderness “Wilds” Segments: Bailey, Willow, and Wolf	“Scenic” Segments: Buffalo, Blackrock, Pacific, Crystal, Granite, and Gros Ventre	“Recreational” Segments: Snake River Canyon, and Hoback River Canyon	
Recreation ORV	Number of days motorized watercraft (over 20 hp) is reported per season. A			No more than 10 days of motorized craft use in a season	No more than 20 days of motorized watercraft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Redirect/info for approp. locations * Require permit to keep use below threshold * Initiate WGF regulation to close to motorized
	Total number of watercraft passing by a selected location per day. B		No more than 10	Buffalo 10 Pacific 10 Gros Ventre 30; Granite 75	Snake: use current limits Hoback 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Redirect/info for approp. locations * Assess primary causes * Redesign facilities * Change group size limits/requirements * Require permit to keep use below threshold (specific group types; various levels of intensity) * Consider spatial/temporal segregation of types
	Number of anglers per X distance of streambank at selected locations C	(Crystal Meadows) No more than X anglers w/in visible proximity or ¼ mile along streambank	Less (Willow) No more than X anglers w/in visible proximity or ¼ mile along streambank	Med (Crystal) No more than X anglers within visible proximity or ¼ mile along streambank	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Redirect/info for approp. locations * Redesign facilities * Partner w/WGF to improve fishing opportunities elsewhere * WGF requirement to use outfitters * Require permit to keep use below threshold (various levels of intensity)

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	Exceeding 80% occupancy of dispersed campsites in defined areas D			Granite: 80% more than 10 days/month All others: 80% more than 5 days/month Blackrock n/a	(No dispersed camping)	* Redirect/info for approp. locations * Redesign facilities * Reduce stay limits * Harden sites * Road fee areas
	People at one time; at selected times and locations E				No more than X at one time Lunch Counter Popular play waves	* Redirect/info for approp. locations * Redesign facilities (bigger/smaller); * Kayak shop outreach * Increase onsite ranger presence * Parking time limits * Fee site for parking
	Number of days existing vehicle access areas meet facility design capacity (are full) F			No more than X days/season: Crystal fishing Pullout Granite winter TH GVR winter TH GVR slide	Snake: boat ramps Hoback fishing Pullout	* Redirect/info for approp. locations * Redesign facilities (bigger/smaller); * Increase onsite ranger presence * Parking time limits * Fee site for parking
Cultural	Number of cultural damage reports per year G	All areas at 3/yr				* Assess causes @ 2/site * Change trail/use locations * Close sites * Harden over
Ecological/ Wildlife ORV	Number of wildlife incidents in the river corridor as reported by Wyoming Game & Fish H	No more than 2 incidents* above baseline** in the river corridor as reported by Wyoming Game & Fish per year.	No more than 2 incidents* above baseline**	No more than 1 incident* above baseline	No more than 1 incident* above baseline**	* Increase public education/behavioral modification * Install bear poles and bear boxes and increase availability of containers * Increase requirements on public and outfitter permits * Allow only hard-sided camping * Expand the area covered by the food storage order * Close areas or facilities

	X # of large animal-vehicle collisions on highways per year per segment (above 09 baseline) I	N/a	N/a	Blackrock X	Snake Y and Hoback Z	* Education * Signage—silhouettes, your speed is..., warnings * Increase enforcement * Increase sight distance * Install wildlife friendly crossings * Speed limit change
Water Quality	% above 2009 baseline of stock holding areas exceeding condition class C within 200 feet of the river J	No more than 5% increase in stock holding areas exceeding condition class C within 200 feet of the river, per 5 years	No more than 7% increase in stock holding areas exceeding condition class C within 200' of river, per 5 years	No more than 10% increase in stock holding areas exceeding condition class C w/in 200' of the river, per 5 years	n/a	* Close and relocate sites * Rehabilitate sites * Decrease amount of stock allowed * Require permits and education with stock use